

VIRGINIA WILDLIFE

SEPTEMBER 2016

FOUR DOLLARS



Dogs on Trial • National Sporting Library • David's First Deer



Bob Duncan Executive Director

Across the state, we remain focused on connecting people with wildlife—through many different venues. We conduct and closely follow surveys that offer insight about our customers and the services we provide. When hunters are asked about their sport and what impediments lead to decreased hunting activity, the resounding answer is “access.” Whether it be less access to public land, or ownership changes that take private land out of the hunting mix, or a feeling of hunters being too crowded on the land they hunt, the theme of diminished access is clearly heard.

Over the past five years, we have made significant progress toward improving hunting opportunities, through the acquisition of 13 land parcels that represent an additional 14,000 acres. The cost of doing so was paid for by federal grants, by conservation partners, by state bonds, and of course, by all who purchase hunting licenses in Virginia. These purchases bring the total amount of Department-managed property to nearly 200,000 acres, continuing our status as the number one holder of state land in Virginia. I believe these acquisitions underscore our resolve to provide you with high-quality outdoor experiences.

We have also partnered with land management agencies and corporate land owners to create mutually beneficial hunting experiences on their properties. David



Hart's feature (p. 10) about reclaiming surface mines for wildlife habitat speaks to the PALS—or Public Access Lands for Sportsmen—initiative that has opened up thousands of private acres to hunters.

Improving opportunities for anglers via expanded capacity is another way we support you. Since 2005, renovations to the Coursey Springs and King & Queen hatcheries, 15 public boat landings, and Laurel Bed Lake dam, as well as stocking programs to boost trout fishing, are prime examples. And a newly signed agreement with Tennessee that allows Virginia anglers to access enhanced fisheries in the South Holston Reservoir under a special fishing license is yet another measure of how we value quality recreation.

Of course these initiatives don't occur overnight. And, they aren't cheap. We know from tracking the consumer price index that the same amount of money buys much less today than it did five years ago. Purchasing power has, indeed, taken a hit. But the examples here demonstrate our commitment to you and should remind us all that we are working on your behalf. This is *your* wildlife agency. We continue to look down the road, to invest in your future. We never lose sight of your support, and we take very seriously the responsibility to steward your wildlife resources and spend your money wisely.

Mission Statement

To manage Virginia's wildlife and inland fish to maintain optimum populations of all species to serve the needs of the Commonwealth; To provide opportunity for all to enjoy wildlife, inland fish, boating and related outdoor recreation and to work diligently to safeguard the rights of the people to hunt, fish and harvest game as provided for in the Constitution of Virginia; To promote safety for persons and property in connection with boating, hunting and fishing; To provide educational outreach programs and materials that foster an awareness of and appreciation for Virginia's fish and wildlife resources, their habitats, and hunting, fishing, and boating opportunities.

Dedicated to the Conservation of Virginia's Wildlife and Natural Resources

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DOGS

story by Clarke C. Jones
photos by Dwight Dyke

Leave it to a southerner to help create one of the oldest dog trials in the United States. W.W. (Uncle Billy) Titus of West Point, Mississippi, along with Edward Dexter, who owned what would become the famous Charlottesville Field Trial Kennels, promoted and lobbied for a national championship that would recognize the best bird dog in the country. In 1896, the first National Championship—a field trial for pointers and setters—was won by a setter, Count Gladstone IV. That championship has run almost without exception since and is considered at least among bird dog owners as, “the most prestigious event of its kind, the field trial equivalent of the Kentucky Derby.”

Despite the decline in quail and waterfowl hunting, dog trials still exist and have even expanded into non-hunting events. According to Todd Kellam with the U. S. Kennel Club, there are two reasons dog events are important: “First, and foremost, it gives people something to get out and do with their dog. It is fun for the owners and great for the dogs. Secondly, I think that by offering dog events, better dogs get bred from generation to generation. Many dog events are competitive and dogs earn championship titles based on head-to-head competition. Yet others [events] are not competitive in that they have performance standards that dogs need to meet in order to earn championships. In both cases, dogs that earn titles, degrees, and championships are the best of the best. These events give us



Jeff Winall (on horse) helped judge this bird dog trial. Setter Chipokaes Joe is shown here with his owner, Waverly Coleman. Below, members of the Tidewater Retriever Club prepare a Lab for an upcoming trial.



on Trial

a measuring stick as to how well our dogs perform in their individual areas of expertise."

BIRD DOG TRIALS

It is believed that the first bird dog trials held in the United States were to initiate in some formal way what would be considered the best bird dog in the country by having bird dogs follow a course over a prescribed number of acres and see which one found the most birds, to put it simply. A dog's "style" and "drive" were also considered. The Llewellyn setter was the more popular breed, or maybe it was the more popular breed to those who organized the first trials, so setters won those events. It wasn't until a decade or so later that pointers began to dominate trials. Pointers proved to be

faster and harder-going dogs, and once they started winning bird dog trials, it was rare to see a setter win over a pointer in the National Championship when they competed together.

There are numerous bird dog registrants that sanction dog trials. Perhaps the best known are the American Kennel Club (AKC), founded in 1884, which registers approximately 20,000 purebred dogs annually, and the United Kennel Club (UKC), established in 1898. The American Field Stud Book registers pointers and setters. That book actually predates the American Kennel Club and provided the AKC a great deal of information which assisted in the club's formation. The AKC used to register only purebred dogs and allow only purebred dogs in its trials.

However, according to Todd

Lundgren with the AKC, in April 2010 it opened its companion trials, which consist of rally trials, obedience trials, and agility trials, to mixed breed dogs. The UKC registers purebred but also has what is known as a limited privilege program—where dogs other than purebred can compete. Each of these organizations has their own rules and regulations as to how a bird dog trial is scored. Specific breed clubs also have their own field trials, where only that breed of dog may enter.

Bird dog trials showcase what a particular group of hunters or owners look for in a bird dog. Some want to see a dog staunch and steady while on point and test the dog's ability to honor another dog already on point.

Below, this English setter is steady on point during a bird dog trial.





Agility trials test a dog's ability to clear obstacles correctly and without fault; in this case, a hoop.

In some trials, a dog must not only point but retrieve shot game as well. In other such trials, the handler must walk and handle his dog. In still others, the dog owners and the gallery are all on horseback. Depending upon the type of trial, a dog may run a course in 10 to 25 minutes; in others, where endurance is a key element of a dog's standard, a dog may run up to 3 hours!

RETRIEVER TRIALS

The UKC and AKC are sanctioning registries that run retriever trials or tests. There is also an organization called NAHRA (for, North American Hunting Retriever Association), that holds trials. Retriever field trials and retriever hunt tests may look similar,

but they are different. A retriever field trial is often thought of as a competition between dogs, and hunt tests are where a retriever runs against a written standard. In a hunt test, dogs that meet the standard are awarded ribbons and points toward a title. In a field trial, dogs are awarded a placement such as first, second, or third and are awarded ribbons and points according to *how* they place. In a hunt test consisting of 40 retrievers, 30 may qualify because they met the written standard. In a field trial, however, perhaps only 3 dogs out of the 40 performed well enough to place, and the rest of the entries may leave with no ribbons and no points.

Ron and Marge Samuels of Amber Run Kennels in Amelia have

been breeding, training, or trialing retrievers since the middle 1980s. "We have run in AKC field trials, NAHRA hunt tests, UKC hunt tests, and AKC hunt tests," said Ron. "We like the hunt test atmosphere in that it is geared toward hunters, and the non-competitive nature of the test makes a lot of friends because everyone wants each other to succeed. Field trials are much more technical and require a lot of training time. Field trial dogs are great dogs and it just boils down to what appeals to you."



Members of the Deep Run Hunt Club exercise their hounds during the off-season.

COONHOUND TRIALS

The United Kennel Club's coonhound program licenses as many as 4,500 coonhound night hunts annually. You would think with that many people and hounds running around in the woods at night, someone would likely notice. Again, Todd Kellam pointed out, "The general public has no idea how popular the sport of competition coonhunting is in comparison to other hunting dog trials. Collectively, among all the registries that offer hunting dog events, coonhound events would add up to more than all the others combined."

The object of this type of trial, like that of all dog trials, is to test the per-

formance of a dog's ability to do what it was bred to do. In this case it is to track and tree a raccoon. Ashby Nuckols, an active member of the Louisa Coonhunters Association, explained it this way: "Each hound has its own individual cry and the owner of each hound knows his hound's particular bark. When a coon is tracked and a hound begins to 'sound,' the owner lets a judge know that is his hound. The hound that trees the coon first is awarded points." Rarely, if ever, is the coon

ple I know who own a coonhound take very, very good care of it."

Annually, the coonhound season culminates in a final trial, and there is a triple crown of competitions. "It generates quite a bit of money to the town that hosts it, as attendance for the weekend may draw up to 40,000 people," said Nuckols.

AGILITY TRIALS

A number of dog trials don't involve wild game, and agility trials are one of the more popular venues. As Laura Streng of the Central Virginia Agility Club described, "Just about every weekend you can find an agility trial within 100 to 150 miles from a major city." At these trials you can see all breeds, shapes, and sizes of dogs that run through an obstacle course. A dog and its owner enter a ring set up with obstacles such as ramps, tunnels, hurdles, hoops, and weaves. At a designated signal, the owner starts the dog through these obstacles that the dog must clear correctly and without a fault. Any faults are noted by the judge in the ring. In the "excellent" class, your dog qualifies by not committing an error. The time it takes your dog to go through the course also matters to some degree, but the object is to qualify by passing

through each obstacle without a fault. It is a fast-paced challenge for both the owner and the dog. A qualification in a trial equals a "leg" and three legs equal a title.

There are different classes of difficulty for dogs of different heights. Although border collies, shelties, and Australian shepherds are some of the more popular breeds that run in these trials, you will see every breed and size of dog compete. In AKC-sanctioned trials, the ultimate goal is to receive the title of master agility champion. These are great, fun activities in which any family member and any dog can participate!

BEAGLE TRIALS

According to O. C. Greenwood Jr. of the Old Dominion Beagle Club, "You have brace trials, pack trials, hare trials (which are run in the northern U.S.), and gun dog trials. Greenwood has been trialing beagles since the late 1960s and probably typifies most whose dogs chase wild game. "This is a *no kill* sport and we do everything possible to provide cover, food, and protection for the rabbits the beagles scent. We feed the rabbits 12 months out of the year.

Greenwood runs in brace trials as



Retriever trials can involve a hunt test or a field trial. Right, setters wait their turn to trial.

caught. As Ashby noted, "The object of these trials is to tree the coon. We do *not* want the coon harmed."

West Virginian Tim Shanley, who participates in hunts in Virginia, added, "Coon hunts are *no kill* hunts. No gun is allowed on the premises. We do not want to see a raccoon injured or killed. The more raccoons there are, the better it helps our sport. These coon trials are all about making a dog a champion, not about harming the animal."

Dr. Tom Carroll, a deer hunter and veterinarian noted, "Deer leave a very strong scent, so even a hound that is just adequate can usually follow a deer, but a coonhound has to have a very good sense of smell if it is going to be competitive. Most people



opposed to pack trials. Here, two beagles are brought out on their leashes and the spectator gallery walks nearby, hoping to flush a rabbit. When a rabbit is flushed someone yells "TALLEY HO!" and the two beagles in the brace that are competing against each other are brought to where the rabbit was flushed, and released. Beagles in this type of trial are not gauged on speed; in fact, these beagles more or less walk when following the rabbit's scent.

"The beagles are judged on how accurately they follow the scent," Greenwood pointed out.

Beagle trialers in Virginia will travel from New York to Georgia to participate in these weekend events. The dogs compete in different classes and are segregated by height.

Beagle trials, like most dog trials, are a family sport. "My wife has her own beagles and has won at more than one trial. We have met some of the nicest people at these trials and some have remained close personal friends for many years," Greenwood stated.

HERDING TRIALS

Herding trials test a dog's ability to take commands and interact, not only with its trainer, but also with other live animals. As opposed to retrieving game to a handler, it must move livestock through a pre-designed course. A good herding dog seems to be able to "read" the actions of the cattle, ducks, or sheep that it must herd.

In these trials, you have a handler who gives signals as to what he or she wants the dog to do and you have herd animals that may have some idea of what *they* want to do. The dog and handler work together to apply the right amount of guidance to move animals through a course. If the handler gives too many commands, points are taken away. If any of the livestock misses a gate, points are deducted. There are also different degrees of difficulty in a herding trial. The ultimate goal at a trial is to qualify by meeting a prescribed standard. Dogs that win enough qualification "legs" eventually win titles.



Above, a beagle is hot on the scent of a flushed rabbit. Here, an excited fox hound stands at the ready.





A blue heeler (top) and Australian shepherd perform in agility trials, while a border collie herds below.

Wink Mason, of Goldvein, has been training dogs for herding trials for over 25 years. "Years ago I saw border collies in a herding trial and I was fascinated by the dog. I got one and started trialing and now teach people how to be herding trialers."

OBEDIENCE TRIALS

Perhaps the simplest and best way to learn about trialing is to enter your dog in obedience training. Whether you want to trial or not, obedience training is the best investment you can make. It creates a lasting bond between the two of you and, more importantly, obedience training lays the foundation for future training. It has the added benefit of perhaps saving your dog's life.

In obedience competition, there are three levels: novice, open, and utility. A qualifying score means the dog has passed all the required exercises according to UKC or AKC obedience regulations. Competitions offer a wonderful opportunity to not only spend time with your dog, but also to meet people who may share your interests.

Admittedly, dog trials are not widely publicized, and it requires some investigation to learn when and where they take place. Perhaps the best way to find out about dog trials in your area is to visit the websites of the UKC, the AKC, and American Field. If you find someone who does run a dog in a particular trial, more than likely they would be happy for you to come and watch if you have a sincere interest in doing so. Watching a trial is a good way to become more familiar with different dog breeds. Plus, you can see first-hand how much fun entering can be! Dog trials are free outdoor events that offer your family the opportunity to participate in something other than the latest video game. □

Clarke C. Jones is a freelance writer who spends his spare time with his black lab, Luke, hunting up good stories. You can visit his website at www.clarkecjones.com.

RESOURCE:

Skehan, Everett. *Fields of Glory, Volume 1, 1874-1930*; documents the early history of bird dog trials.





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Miner

*Surface mines make
great wildlife habitat.
It just takes time.*

by David Hart

Somewhere ahead of us, Honey weaves through the cover, her nose testing the air for the slightest whiff of grouse in the thick undergrowth. The habitat is a diverse mix of autumn olive trees, curtains of grapevines that drape

over tree limbs, blackberry thickets, greenbriers, and a mix of larger trees. In short, it's perfect grouse country. I carry my shotgun with nervous anticipation, fully expecting the rush of wings as Mike Giles and I stroll down a trail that runs across a flat bench. Honey, his Llewellyn setter, bounces across the path and disappears into a thicket. A short rock wall rises on our left; a steep hill falls away to our right. The ridge, barely 10 yards wide, is the byproduct of a surface coal mine, Giles tells me. At one time it was little more than a towering mound of mine tailings—dirt and rock scooped



What was once a surface coal mine is now 19,000 acres of great public hunting land.

the moon, the byproduct of a surface coal mine. Pretty amazing how the land can heal itself over time.

Giles, president of the Appalachian Highlands Chapter of the Ruffed Grouse Society, isn't just an avid grouse hunter. He's also a reclamation program manager with the Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals, and Energy. Some of his favorite

places to hunt his favorite game bird are surface coal mines—those very places that are scorned by activist groups of many stripes.

There's no question the practice of scraping away everything on the Earth's surface—including the trees, topsoil and rock—to reach a seam of coal leaves behind an ugly scar on entire mountainsides and the potential to ruin the quality of water in nearby streams for decades. It's become a battle cry for environmental groups who want the practice stopped. But America needs coal, and surface mining is often the only way to effectively and safely reach shallow coal seams.

Prior to 1977, mining operations were subject to virtually no environmental oversight and coal companies left surface mines to recover on their own. Entire mountaintops were knocked over, streams and valleys were filled with tailings, and the topsoil was often buried beneath tons of rock and gravel. After the coal was removed, the mining companies simply moved on to the next mine. It was just the cost of doing business.

for Wildlife

away from the adjacent hillside as miners dug out the coal. Now, however, that ridge is covered in a diverse mix of timber and short, thick brush.

I know this 2,000-acre tract deep in the knobby mountains of southwest Virginia was once a surface mine because Giles told me, but until my hunting partner reminds me that the ridge we are walking on was man-made, I have no clue that anything besides the powerful forces of nature shaped it. The terrain we hunt could pass for any typical southwest Virginia mountain. Thirty years ago, however, this tract was as barren as



Virginia's black gold remains at the heart of an ongoing environmental battle.

passed the Surface Mine Control and Reclamation Act (SMCRA) in 1977. The rule requires mining companies to post a bond, about \$3,000 per acre in Virginia, which guarantees the mining company will follow reclamation guidelines established by the 1977 law. It's a set of strict rules that comes with heavy fines for those companies that don't follow the environmental guidelines set forth in the law. Virginia took the reclamation rules a step further in 1981 by dictating best management practices for reforestation of abandoned surface mines.

From Mine to Wildlife

"The first thing the mining companies have to do when they finish extracting the coal is restore the approximate, original contour of the ground," explained Giles. "They back-fill and re-grade the hills to recreate the mountain prior to the mining operation. Before they even start mining, they have to remove the topsoil and set it aside and then put that topsoil back on the land after they finish the grading."

After rebuilding the mountain, the topsoil is spread across the rock and gravel that has been re-graded

and the soil is hydro-seeded with a variety of grasses. Giles said in the years following the passage of the SMCRA, reclamation efforts focused almost entirely on erosion control. Fescue was the primary plant choice because it grew fast and established a strong root system that held soil in place. However, fescue offers little benefit to wildlife and can actually slow the growth of other, more beneficial plant life.

"There were also a lot of white pines and autumn olive planted because they grew fast and did a good job of holding the soil," noted Giles.

Now mining companies are placing more emphasis on creating high-quality wildlife habitat by planting a variety of species that offer food and cover. That shift was the result of efforts by a variety of conservation groups who asked mine companies to give more consideration to wildlife and long-term resource management. The ground is still overseeded with grass as soon as the grading is completed, but instead of using fescue, reclamation contractors use a variety of grasses like orchard grass, millet, perennial rye, and weeping lovegrass, along with legumes like birdsfoot trefoil, white clover, and



Once a silt-choked ditch due to coal extraction, restoration efforts have turned it into a vibrant stream that supports aquatic insects and fish.

Kobe lespedeza. All offer some benefit to wildlife but still hold valuable topsoil in place.

Giles explained that newer reclamation efforts also reduce soil compaction by minimizing the use of heavy equipment. Instead of running a bulldozer across the ground repeatedly, the topsoil is spread loosely and allowed to settle on its own, which helps tree seedlings get a better start.

"You get better root penetration if the soil isn't packed down so tight," he added.

As soon as the grass sprouts, contractors return and plant a mix of tree and shrub seedlings at rates of at least 400 seedlings per acre. One 240-acre mine site was replanted with 134,000 seedlings, including 5,000 crabapples, 10,000 black oaks, 44,000 red oaks, and 10,000 redosier dogwoods. White pines are still part of the diversity, but more emphasis is placed on wildlife and commercially-viable trees like white and red oaks. Giles said some landowners reforest surface mines with an eye toward commercial timber harvest in the future, but about 80 percent of the land is considered unmanaged forest. Once it's replanted, it's left to return to a completely natural state.

Lance DeBord, an environmental



Ecologists examine life in a stream that was restored after a surface mine operation finished.

Lance DeBord, an environmental manager with DR Allen and Associates, an environmental consulting firm that oversees reclamation efforts, said forestry companies who are contracted to help restore these lands plant at least five tree species, plus a variety of nurse trees and shrubs like indigo bush, alder, dogwood, and crabapple.

"We don't plant autumn olive, although it was used pretty extensively in the past. It's a good wildlife shrub, but it is a non-native invasive and we want to avoid those," he noted.

It only takes a year or two before wildlife returns. Deer and turkeys emerge from adjoining forests to feed on new plant growth and ground-nesting birds find refuge in the knee-high grasses. As the plant life matures, deer and turkeys use the dense cover not only as a food source, but as fawning and nesting cover, as well. DeBord said bears also visit the cover and songbirds are abundant in the vibrant growth in the years following the replanting. Habitat on reclaimed mine sites is adding variety to the wildlife habitat of neighboring lands that consist entirely of mature hardwood forests.

Reclamation efforts also include

streams, which have to be returned to their original state, or at least close to their original contour and gradient, said DeBord.

"Paramont Coal (the largest coal company in the region) has restored about 10,000 linear feet of streams since 2005," he noted. "The cost runs anywhere from about \$100 to \$300 per linear foot."

Most of the watersheds are small and only hold aquatic insects and a few species of small fish like dace, chubs, and darters, but DeBord said those fish and insects often return within months of restoration efforts. He recalled one headwater stream that had no fish prior to the mining operation, but was teeming with minnows soon after reclamation efforts were completed. A natural barrier was removed during the restoration work, allowing fish to migrate upstream.

"We plant trees and shrubs along the edges of these waters, also, because we know shade is very important to the aquatic life," he said.

Public Hunting Abounds

Many of the reclaimed mines, like the one Giles and I hunted that mild day last November, are open to hunting

by permit from the mining companies themselves. However, one of the largest surface mines open to hunting is a 19,000-acre contiguous tract in Dickenson County. It's a prime example of the cooperation between private entities and public interests like the DGIF that benefits hunters. The PALS, or Public Access Lands for Sportsmen, is owned by Heartwood Forestland Fund IV and is a diverse mix of even-aged mature trees and clear-cuts of varying growth stages. It offers outstanding habitat for grouse, bears, turkeys, and deer, according to John Baker, wildlife lands manager for the Department.

"This land has been mined on and off for as long as there has been coal mining in Virginia and there are some active mine operations right now," he said, "but most of the land is in various stages of regeneration. The habitat on the PALS land is much more diverse than it is on much of the area's public land."

The PALS tract has been under a cooperative agreement for six years and is open only to hunting, fishing, and trapping, noted Baker, who has experienced some reasonable success on past grouse hunts himself. It doesn't receive much pressure, but only because it is located in a remote section of the state where local hunters typically have good access to other private land.

Giles is one of those hunters. Although he can hunt national forest, he often finds himself following his setter across reclaimed mine land because the habitat is so good. DeBord is also an avid hunter and angler. So are many of the miners themselves.

"I grew up hunting and fishing this area. I'm in this business because I care about the resource and I want to do my part to help take care of it," said DeBord. "I want the next generation to be able to hunt or fish or cut timber on these places and say, 'These guys did good work.'"

David Hart is a full-time freelance writer and photographer from Rice. He is a regular contributor to numerous national hunting and fishing magazines.



©David Hart

Reclaimed mining sites are replanted with a variety of beneficial shrubs, grasses, and trees that attract wildlife.

A Tribute to Our *Sporting Heritage*



Vine Hill, Future Home of the National Sporting Museum



War-Weary Horse Sculpture by Tessa

The National Sporting Library & Fine Art Museum in Middleburg preserves the art, literature, and culture of horse and field sports.

story and photos
by Beth Hester

Amere 45 minutes away from the congestion of Washington rests the historic town of Middleburg. Situated along highway 50, it's nestled into the green and mildly rolling landscape of the northern end of Virginia's Piedmont

region. This is serious hunt country, where equine and other field sport traditions are deeply embedded in the culture. Evidence of the region's richness is pervasive, from the proximity to some of our state's most historic areas, to the farms and vineyards that dot the side roads. The District of Columbia certainly bears the distinction of housing many of our nation's treasures, but the National Sporting Library (NSL) in Middleburg is a unique venue, the only facility of its kind in America solely devoted to preserving documents that chronicle our country's

drawings, journals, and related field sport ephemera grew exponentially.

Due to the ever-growing collection, the NSL eventually occupied the pre-Civil War, Federal-style building known as Vine Hill before



Shooting Along the Atlantic Tidewater, a handwritten manuscript by Teddy Roosevelt, a rare first edition of John James Audubon's seven-volume *Birds of America*, an essay by Grover Cleveland (his fascinating and muscular defense of angling), and several first editions of Izaak Walton's *The Compleat Angler* (1653). Of particular note is an Italian volume of prints, circa 1600, originally commissioned by the Medici family. The etchings depict a variety of hunting techniques, including a mobile duck blind of sorts—a frame constructed of hay, affixed to a rolling wooden cart. These prints depict the social life of communities revolving around, and bonding through, the seasonal rounds of hunting, fishing, and farming. As important as the thrill visitors get from viewing these historic volumes firsthand is the visceral sense of tradition and continuity that link the sporting adventures of other eras with our own.

Though many of these books are housed in the rare book room, the readily accessed general stacks are categorized by topic, then by the author's last name. There are books written during the 'golden age' of sport, like those by Mary Orvis Marbury,



Top, new construction melds seamlessly with existing architecture. Shown here, a drawing of the NSL complex when completed.

sporting history. It is also one of Virginia's best kept secrets—a destination that should be on every sports-person's vacation itinerary.

Preservation

George Ohrstrom Sr., who was president of the Orange County Hunt, and Alexander Mackay-Smith, who was editor of *The Chronicle of the Horse*, founded the non-profit in 1954. The initial idea for a national sporting library stemmed from a group of friends and colleagues bound by a love of foxhunting, who wanted their personal sporting book collections to remain intact after their deaths. Word quickly spread, and the collection of books, periodicals,

moving in 1999 to a brand new, climate-controlled building that resembles a carriage house. The venerable Vine Hill manor house, adjacent to the library, is currently being converted into what will be the Fine Art Museum, an important component of the NSL campus experience. The museum, which is due to open in the autumn of 2011, will house both permanent and changing collections by American, English, and continental artists. Sculpture, paintings, works-on-paper and sporting artifacts will span the eighteenth through the twentieth centuries.

The NSL collections contain over 17,000 volumes of interest to shooter and angler alike, including a 1947 copy of Eugene Connett's *Duck*



The historic Red Fox Inn.

Roderick Haig-Brown, and Nash Buckingham, and also by contemporary authors like James Prosek and Nick Lyons. It would take multiple visits to really appreciate the breadth of the various collections, but librarian Lisa Campbell is a knowledgeable and entertaining guide who makes the visitor feel at home among the NSL's dizzying array of treasures.

Scholarship

Casual browsers are always welcome to peruse the stacks or relax in an armchair with a fresh copy of *Gray's Sporting Journal*, but the NSL is also a major resource for field sport scholars, journalists, and researchers. The John H. Daniels Fellowship, established in 2007, helps to support scholars and independent writers who use the facilities to do research across a broad spectrum of disciplines. Lengths of residency range from two weeks to more than six months.

Director of Administration Rick Stoutamyer believes that the fellowship program plays a central role in the library's mission: "Going forward, our goal is to take the library to the next level, moving from our current reputation as an excellent local and regional facility, toward one with an increasingly international reach. The fellowship program is crucial to making the library truly useful from

an academic standpoint, helping to perpetuate both sporting culture and land preservation. The library and art museum as complementary resources will draw visitors in from more far-flung areas."

Liz Tobey, Ph.D. is director of communications and research and currently administers the fellowship program. She's been impressed not only by the growing number of people applying for the program, but also by the wide-ranging subject matter: Dueling, conservation, stable design, equestrian costume, all topics that testify to the influence field sports have had on various aspects of culture. To date, former Daniels Fellows have lectured and published on topics as varied as: "*Anglers & the Conservation of Atlantic Salmon Stocks in North America*," and "*The Hunter's Eye in Martin Johnson Heade's Landscapes and Still Lives*." Although the NSL is generally a non-circulating library, eager readers may access certain volumes via inter-library loan, and lists of the collections may be accessed online.

Ms. Tobey emphasizes that the NSL encourages writers and independent researchers who don't come specifically from academic backgrounds: "Our resources are a public treasure, and we actively encourage sporting literacy. Our Fellows go on to lecture and publish, thus helping

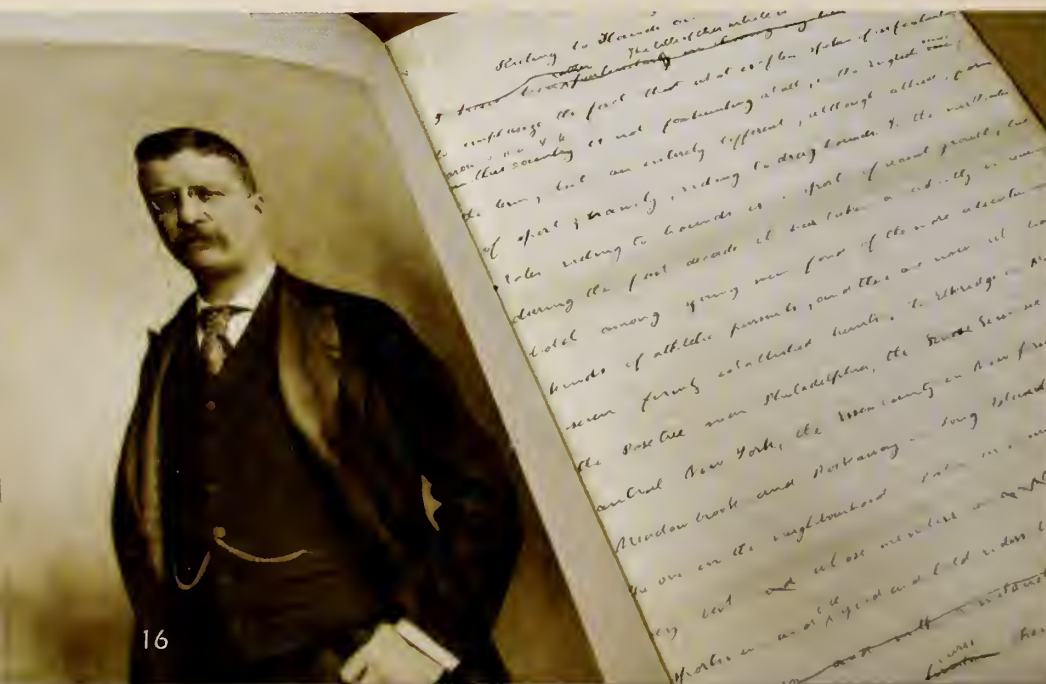
to pass on the rituals and traditions of field sport. Along with game wardens and park personnel, hunters, anglers, and birdwatchers are all on the front lines, exposed to what goes on in the environment...so when you educate people about sporting traditions, you are also exposing them to ideas about conservation and land use."



Comfortable surroundings invite the visitor to relax and browse.



F. Turner Reuter Jr., Curator of Fine Arts for the NSL. Left, Teddy Roosevelt's manuscript is on display in the rare manuscript room.



Outreach

Through a combination of changing exhibits, films, lectures, and symposia, the library reaches out to the community at large. Some recent examples: *The Lives of Dogs in Literature, Art, and Ephemera*. Through December 11, 2010, visitors can view 18th- and 19th-century dog collars, books, documents, and paintings, all celebrating the complex relationship between dogs and humans. In 2009, a one-day symposium was held titled, "*A River Never Sleeps: Conservation,*

History, and the Fly Fishing River." John Ross of Upperville lectured on "*Native Trout Species of Virginia*," and Hoagy Carmichael spoke about "*The Grand Cascadia: Salmon River of History*."

The NSL also offers programs for young readers. The newest is scheduled for September 8th at 2:00 p.m. Author and artist James Prosek will talk about his children's book, "*Bird, Butterfly, Eel*," and also give a painting demonstration.

Because of the success of such programs, and the popularity of the catalogs and publications that the NSL has produced to date, there are plans to establish a permanent publishing arm, which would further extend the educational reach of both the library and the fine art museum.

Vine Hill, from Historic Home to Museum of Sporting Art

Turner Reuter Jr. is curator of fine arts for the NSL and one of the primary overseers of the Vine Hill conversion. Once the renovation and the 7,500-square-foot additions are completed, the museum will boast 11 galleries, a large loading area, storage, and office space.

During a recent tour through the Vine Hill construction site, it was remarkable to see the exacting effort and skill it takes to expand and rejuvenate a historic building. The external site plan, which encompasses the existing buildings, highlights Tessa Pullen's bronze sculpture of a weary horse, a sober memorial to the approximately 1,350,000 horses that died during the Civil War (p. 14).

With lifelong ties to the area, Reuter is the proprietor of Middleburg's Red Fox Inn, where as a young man he hung his growing inventory of sporting art. He is also the author of *Animal & Sporting Artists in America*, an art collector, gun dog enthusiast, farmer, and gallery owner. His extensive equestrian resume includes tenure as master of the Piedmont Fox Hounds from 1996 until

2002. His passion for foxhunting comes not only from the synergy between horse, rider and dog, but from a celebration of the land itself. The ritual of foxhunting requires large swaths of open land. Being a good steward of that land, and maintaining it on a day-to-day basis, forges an intimate bond with the countryside.

Turner is excited about the museum's 2011 inaugural exhibition designed to educate the general public about animal and sporting art, and also about the landmark, illustrated catalog produced for the exhibition by the library, and by the museum's curatorial staff. It will include important essays and commentary by prominent art historians. The specific dates surrounding the museum's opening have yet to be announced, but updates will be available via the NSL website.

The completed National Sporting Library & Fine Art Museum campus will be the newest jewel in Virginia's cultural crown. It will provide a venue for visitors to experience the importance of sporting art and literature as a reflection of American history and social life. It will enable new generations of scholars and sports-



A view of the charming NSL and meticulously kept grounds. Below, new construction honors the character of existing buildings.



men to better interpret creative expressions of our nation's rich sporting heritage. □

Beth Hester is a writer and freelance photographer from Portsmouth. Her passions include reading, shooting, kayaking, fishing, tying salt-water flies, and tending her herb garden.

Contact Information

National Sporting Library
& Fine Art Museum
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Post Office Box 1335
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www.nsl.org

Western Branch's *Angling Bounty*



©Dwight Dyke



©Marc McGlade

Giant shellcrackers are common here, like this one held by DGIF fisheries biologist Chad Boyce.

Suffolk's Western Branch Reservoir is an angling gold mine.

by Marc N. McGlade

For those unfamiliar with the Suffolk lakes, suffice it to say this region of the Old Dominion is stacked with exceptional fisheries. Western Branch Reservoir qualifies as one. This reservoir spans 1,279 acres, and is the largest of the Suffolk lakes. Similar to Lake Prince, the reservoir is owned by the city of Norfolk, and provides Southside and Tidewater anglers with an incredible fishery. Its moniker derives from the stream on which it was impounded in 1962: the western branch of the Nansemond River. This horseshoe-shaped lake has Lake Prince upstream on one arm and Burnt Mills Reservoir upstream on the other.

Western Branch provides anglers the opportunity to catch a wide variety of species such as largemouth bass, shellcracker, bluegill, black crappie, white perch, yellow perch, and chain pickerel. In addition to these naturally reproducing fishes,

the lake is stocked with striped bass and muskellunge. Of the 25 species for which the Department issues trophy fish certificates, an astonishing 13 inhabit Western Branch Reservoir.

State Records

Chad Boyce is a fisheries biologist from the Department's district office in Chesapeake who manages the reservoir. He affirms the water body has a healthy population of several species.

Western Branch Reservoir is home to two state-record fish. A surprising catch of the state-record Roanoke bass (*Ambloplites cavifrons*) occurred on May 28, 2005. Harry G. Swauger caught the 2-pound, 9-ounce trophy. Not surprisingly, the other state record is for a white catfish (*Ameiurus catus*). Thomas Elkins caught the 7-pound, 6-ounce whiskerfish on March 24, 1992.



©Marc McGlade



Big largemouths are plentiful in Western Branch Reservoir. Photo ©Marc McGlade.

"As for the white catfish, these fish are native and very common in the Nansemond River drainage and the Western Branch of the Nansemond River," explained Boyce. "Very few white cats weighing more than three or four pounds will be caught in the local rivers. It is likely that the stability of a lake environ, versus a more dynamic riverine system, allow the white cats to flourish, and there is likely little competition from other catfish (such as blue cats). However, there are some large channel cats in Western Branch."

The biologist indicates the Roanoke bass state record is a bit of a mystery. According to Boyce, this is the first documented report of a Roanoke bass being caught in the reservoir.

"It just so happens it was a state record," he quipped.

Water is pumped by pipeline from the Nottoway River and Lake Gaston, both of which have populations of Roanoke bass. Boyce says it is pos-

sible a small Roanoke made it through the pipeline and ultimately into Western Branch.

"A more likely possibility," he said, "is what we call angler transport, meaning that an angler released this or other Roanoke bass into the lake or even released into a lake that spills into Western Branch, such as Prince or Burnt Mills."



Red wigglers paired with a sinker will fool some feisty redears (shellcrackers).

The "Branch" Lowdown

This fertile reservoir is known for outstanding largemouth bass fishing, as well as being one of the top trophy sunfish producers in the state. Massive redear sunfish (shellcrackers) inhabit the woody underwater habitats located in the scenic reservoir.



The ramp at Western Branch accommodates appropriately-sized boats.

"We frequently see shellcrackers weighing more than one and a half pounds in our spring sampling surveys," Boyce said. "Striped bass are targeted by devoted anglers as well, and they are still stocked in Western Branch every year. Muskies are stocked at a low rate, but a few big ones have been caught through the years."

Regarding crappies, the biologists have only collected black crappie in Western Branch, as they are the fish native to this drainage. The average size crappie seems to be around 10 to 11 inches, but Boyce and his colleagues see some larger fish in their sampling, with some up to 13 to 14 inches.

"We have collected white cats in our gill netting samples that were a few ounces heavier than the current state record, and we have captured many white cats just over seven pounds," Boyce added. "All were released alive, so I know for a fact that a new state record could exist in the lake."

Boyce acknowledged that it would be unlikely that another trophy Roanoke bass is in the lake, but he never would have guessed that the current state record would have come from Western Branch!

The main draw to this scenic reservoir is the big largemouth bass and giant shellcrackers. Boyce doubts that anyone would ever seek Roanoke bass specifically, but some anglers target catfish. He believes a big white cat will probably be an accidental catch while fishing for the more popular channel cats.

Boyce added an interesting tidbit he received from Scott Herrmann, the biologist who identified and certified the trophy Roanoke bass. "According to Scott, the gentleman who caught the fish was not sure of exactly what he had caught. He thought it might be a big bluegill. He caught the fish on a Rat-L-Trap or similar lure, then put the fish in the boat livewell and eventually took it home, alive. Conveniently, he had a koi pond at home and decided to put the fish in there to

keep it alive, and called DGIF to get an official identification. Once Scott identified the fish and took an official weight (which was the exact weight of the fish at capture), the process began to certify the fish as an official state record."

A Sure Bet

Suffolk is sandwiched between Virginia's incredible saltwater fishing to the east and Lake Gaston and Buggs Island to the west. Surprisingly, the Suffolk lakes can be overlooked, despite their top-heavy rankings when it comes to the Old Dominion's trophy fish certificates.

Western Branch Reservoir is a special place for anglers who desire variety. It's a 12-month fishery with beautiful scenery and willing fish. Come see for yourself. □

Marc N. McGlade is a writer and photographer from Midlothian, who relishes the opportunity to venture to Suffolk to fish any of the Suffolk lakes.



©Marc McGlade

DGIF fisheries biologists perform electrofishing to sample various species and collect important data such as length measurements (above).



©Marc McGlade

Western Branch Reservoir Information

- ◆ For fisheries information and regulations regarding Western Branch Reservoir, contact our district office in Chesapeake at (757) 465-6812, or visit online at www.HuntFishVA.com.
- ◆ The city of Norfolk website (www.norfolk.gov/utilities/resources/) has lake maps in Adobe Acrobat Reader format. Anglers are required to have a city of Norfolk boat permit (in addition to a Virginia freshwater fishing license) to launch private boats at Western Branch Reservoir. These can be purchased through a mail-in form from the website, or through local outlets.
- ◆ The Western Branch Reservoir boat launch is below the Lake Prince Dam on Route 605 near Providence Church. Bank fishing is prohibited. Gas motors as powerful as 9.9 horsepower are allowed. The city of Norfolk has amended their codes to allow boats with outboard motors larger than 9.9 horsepower to access the lake if the gas tanks are removed or the outboard is disabled (prop removed). Western Branch Reservoir is open sunrise to sunset, all year.

Come to the Fair

story and photos by Gail Brown

They're four of the best ambassadors Virginia could have: wild things who've never met the child (or for that matter, adult) they didn't like. And it appears the feeling is mutual. Many fair-goers return each year to Heritage Village to learn about the commonwealth's natural resources and get their picture taken with one of the Department's handsome four. Can you name them? Well, not by name—wild things don't have names—but by species? They're the corn snake, the Eastern king, the mole king, and the black rat snake. They have been held by so many people for so many years that they're as much a part of the fair experience as corn dogs, racing pigs, fast rides, and rainy days.

Like measuring yourself against a line on the kitchen wall, having a picture taken with any one of these reptiles marks the passing of time—just in a more exciting way. Too bad these snakes can't talk—the stories they could tell! George Bush Sr. was president when the corn snake made his first trip to the fair and he (the corn snake) hasn't missed a year since. That's almost two decades of meeting and greeting people who want to learn about, and want their kids to enjoy, Virginia's natural resources.

To find Heritage Village, just wind your way to the left after entering through the tunnel. Keep going, always heading toward the tree line. On the way you'll pass the Farm Bureau Center, the Ferris wheel, the merry-go-round, and all that good food. Just walk through the gate, sugar-covered kids and all, and on



Look carefully; you might find a shark's tooth, too! Below, be calm and gentle when holding the corn snake.

down to the bottom of the hill. Like that neon-colored cotton candy they've waited for all year, the memories they'll make as they learn about our commonwealth will stick, too. Here you'll find representatives from Virginia's natural resource agencies with exciting activities for everyone.





*Nature has a reason for those colors and textures.
Learning why with your friends is great fun.*

While the Department's display helps us understand the natural world we experience today, the Department of Historic Resources' display of Native American artifacts helps make our cultural history come to life. Behind the buildings you can experience a Virginia Civil War encampment, African-American cultural displays, antique farm machinery, and much.

Zoé Rogers, visitor services specialist for the Department of Conservation and Recreation, claims she can't get over the excitement on the kids' faces as they "travel" to three state parks and pan for gold (Lake Anna State Park), hunt for sharks' teeth (Westmoreland State Park) or search for lucky stones (Fairy Stone St. Park). Yet, the enthusiasm in her voice gives it away. The grownups, too, are having a blast. "It's the expression on their faces—the amazement when they find something—that's so wonderful! It's like a great adventure," stated Rogers. "The children are learning all about our cultural and environmental treasures and having a great time."

Once they pocket their finds, the kids (and flexible adults) can crawl through the Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts' underground tunnel to discover life from a worm's point of view. For information about plants above ground, the Department of Forestry will help answer your questions, and the Department of Environmental Quality's hands-on activities help everyone learn the multiple functions of a healthy wetland. Wildlife educator Suzie Gilley, who has represented the Department at the fair for the last 25 years, believes "the combined efforts of all of the natural resource agencies give everyone a picture of what things need to look like as we build a sustainable environment."

This year the agencies will be back, as will Gilley and those famous reptiles—all waiting to greet you! Just bring that camera... and a great, big smile. □

Gail Brown is a retired teacher and school administrator.



Just look at those smiles! Nothing scary in this tunnel.



DAVID'S FIRST DEER

story and photos
by Bruce Ingram



“I was wondering if you would take me deer hunting over the Thanksgiving holidays,” asked my son-in-law, David Reynolds. “I’ve always wanted to go but no one would ever take me.”

When he said that, memories came flooding back—and many of them weren’t pleasant ones. Like David, I was older when I ventured forth on my maiden deer hunting expedition in 1985. My late father-in-

law kindly consented to let me go with his Alleghany County hunt club. The group’s way of hunting was to implement “pushes” with participants designated as drivers or standers. As a novice I was relegated to being a stander, and on the first drive of the morning, I downed a Bath County four pointer that happened to amble my way. The thrill was such that every autumn since, the pursuit of whitetails, turkeys, and various small game creatures has been a major and marvelous part of my life.

Top, the author shows Reynolds some deer droppings near a food plot. Here, Reynolds learns the safe use of a firearm before his first hunt.

Before that momentous event, though, my most vivid memories were how I had asked a series of friends and acquaintances if they would either let me venture afield with them or allow me to hunt on their land. The response was always negative, with the most common reason being that I might actually kill a whitetail—which would be one less deer for them.

Buchanan's Sherry Crumley, Sixth Congressional District representative for the DGIF board, was instrumental in helping the state initiate an apprentice hunting license.

"I had read where the National Shooting Sports Foundation listed Virginia as one of the states unfriendly to new hunters with our mandatory hunter safety classes, minimum age limits for hunting, and

going through the time commitment of taking a hunter education class," she continued. "In no way does the apprentice license take away from our hunter education program. The apprentice program is just another way to introduce people to hunting."

Why Veteran Hunters Should Mentor Other Adults

Like me, Ms. Crumley did not begin hunting until she was in her 30s when she joined her husband, Jim, on initial outings.



Top, the author points out a white oak that he often hunts nearby. Tree identification is a skill that new hunters should master. Here, Reynolds learns the basics of blind construction before going afield.

So I immediately told David that I would be excited to take him afield and teach him the basics of the pastime. David had decided that he wanted to try deer hunting less than a month before the opening of the firearms season, and with the constraints of his job, it was too late to take a hunter safety class. His best option, then, was to purchase Virginia's new Apprentice Hunting License (AHL).

no Sunday hunting," she noted. "I felt that this was an image that we needed to change."

Crumley contacted the Ohio DNR, which had recently begun an apprentice license program, and confirmed what she already knew: that new hunters often learn best from experienced mentors.

"I also learned that apprentice licenses give adults the chance to see if they will enjoy hunting without

"Nothing beats a veteran hunter acting as a mentor for a novice," she explained. "One of the first things that Jim taught me was that the experience was always more important than the kill. When my husband took me on my first hunt, and I saw the sun rise and heard a gobbler, I was hooked. I could have read about the joys of the outdoors on a piece of paper, but it wouldn't have had the same impact." *(cont. pg. 27)*



While squirrel hunting, Reynolds came across this rub, an important sign to be learned in the pursuit of deer. Acorns (above) are an integral part of a deer's diet, as are persimmons (below). Learning about soft mast will help new hunters understand deer behavior.

Virginia AHL Facts

- The new apprentice hunting license serves as a first-time Virginia resident or nonresident hunting license and is good for two years. The cost is \$11 for residents and \$21 for non-residents.
- An important safety feature of the new license is that the apprentice hunter must be accompanied and *directly supervised* by a hunter possessing a valid Virginia hunting license who is an adult over age 18 (the mentor hunter). "Directly supervised" is defined in the new legislation as "when a person over 18 maintains a close visual and verbal contact with, provides adequate direction to, and can immediately assume control of the firearm from the apprentice hunter." This requirement is in place because the apprentice hunter will not have had to meet the hunter education requirement as a condition of purchasing the license.
- The apprentice license does not qualify the holder to purchase a regular hunting license, nor exempt the holder from compliance with Department regulations. A hunter education course must be successfully completed to obtain a regular hunting license.
- A bear, deer, turkey license and all applicable stamps or permits are required in addition to the apprentice license.
- Previous Virginia resident and non-resident hunting license holders may not use an apprentice license. For more information: 866-721-6911, or www.dgif.virginia.gov/hunting/apprentice-license.

Mentoring Guidelines

- Emphasize the quality of the experience and not the harvest.
- Comply with all laws, regulations, and license requirements.
- Demonstrate good sportsmanship.
- Know your partner's endurance

level and attention span during the outdoor experience.

- Share in making preparations ahead of time (such as scouting the area, knowing weather forecast, acquiring permissions needed).
- Let someone know your plan: where you are planning to go and when you are planning to return.
- Be prepared in case of emergencies.
- Proper clothing may be an important factor during extreme hot or cold weather conditions.
- Make preparations for another adventure, while the thrill of the hunt is still fresh.

Hunting Facts

- ✓ **Hunting Boosts the Economy:** Each year in Virginia, hunters spend more than \$480 million in trip-related and equipment expenditures. Hunting and fishing generate an estimated \$128 million in state and local taxes and directly support more than 24,000 jobs in the state.



Veteran hunters should set up in close proximity to new hunters holding the AHL in order to assist if necessary. Right, Reynolds tries his hand at a grunt call in the hopes of drawing in a buck.



Crumley emphasized that it is every bit as important for veteran sportsmen to take adults afield as it is for them to nurture youngsters. An adult who learns from a veteran hunter about the rudiments of sign, wildlife foods, hunting tactics, and more can then teach his or her own children those same fundamentals.

A Checklist for the New Deer Hunter

My father-in-law was elderly and had health issues when he introduced me to deer hunting at the end of his hunting years, so I had no mentor to teach me the basics. In an attempt to gain that knowledge, I tried reading various hunting magazines, but at that time (and now) they contained almost

exclusively stories on how to kill big bucks—information totally useless to someone new to the pursuit.

With that in mind, I helped David with information I knew he could use, starting with the purchase of a gun. Many sportsmen possess numerous guns, but for the novice, that is an impractical and expensive option. I helped my son-in-law buy a 12-gauge Remington autoloader—a gun, I told him, that he could also use for turkeys and small game. Later, in fact, he employed the scattergun to pursue squirrels on my family's Bote-tourt County land. Before David went afield, the two of us spent time discussing gun handling safety and sighting in. I also reviewed with him the importance of hearing protection.

Remembering one of my first solo deer hunts, I stupidly wore jeans, a cotton shirt and socks, and a dark wind-breaker. When rain began to fall and the temperature plummeted, I left the woods wet and shivering. Determined not to have David repeat my mistakes, I educated him on the virtues of polypro and merino wool underwear, modern camo, and the necessity of wearing blaze orange and comfortable socks and boots.

For a new hunter, such whitetail sign as droppings, rubs, scrapes, footprints, and game trails is a mystery. I helped David understand the importance of all these things. I also gave David a grunt call and instructed him in the various sounds that deer make.

We then reviewed the whitetail's affinity for white and red oak acorns—the soft mast foods deer consume—and how food plots, agricultural areas, and fields can attract these big game animals.

An underrated aspect to hunting education is learning how to select a

✓ Hunting Contributes to Conservation:

Hunting license dollars contributed significantly to funding the acquisition of thousands of acres of land for hunting and habitat. Over the years, the DGIF has acquired more than 200,000 acres of land available to the public for hunting, fishing, wildlife watching, hiking and other recreation.

✓ Hunting Promotes Wildlife Population Management:

Hunting reduces pressure on crops, protects expensive landscaping, cuts down on deer in the roadways, and prevents deer overgrazing an area and destroying habitat needed by other wildlife such as songbirds.

✓ Hunting Promotes Healthy Minds, Spirits, and Bodies:

Being outdoors and active builds strength and improves your overall health.

✓ Hunters Share the Bounty:

Hunters are providing much-needed protein to Virginia's families by donating a deer or a portion of it to Hunters for the Hungry, www.h4hungry.org.

place to set up. I showed my son-in-law how to set close enough to a game trail where he would be within the 40-yard range of the 12 gauge but not so close that whitetails would be more likely to spot him.

The Hunt

David's first deer hunt took place the day before Thanksgiving, on land my family owns in the Sinking Creek Valley of Craig County. At 4:15, as we sat side by side and gazed up the mountain, three deer began strolling toward us. When the trio moved within 40 yards, David's breathing became noticeably louder—and, quite honestly, so did mine. But the lead doe spotted us and quickly led the others away.

The next morning we were at the same stand site and this time, around 10:30, seven whitetails began passing by. The Roanoke resident picked out a mature doe and touched off the autoloader. All the deer ran away and David was afraid that he had missed, but this was just an opportunity for yet another lesson—how to find and follow a blood trail.

I told David that we would separate ourselves by about 10 yards and search the ground for blood. About 20 yards out from where the shot had been fired, David located the first drops of blood. And some 50 yards later, we found the doe herself. Spontaneous whoops erupted from both of us, and I have to say that it was the biggest thrill I experienced hunting or fishing this past season. Soon afterward, I led David through the process of field dressing a whitetail, letting him go through the actual process himself.

◆ ◆ ◆

Two months later, David and his wife, Sarah, came over for a meal of venison soup. As we were finishing up, I was ecstatic to hear David say these words: "Next year, my goal is to kill two deer, so we can have more meat in the freezer." □

Bruce Ingram has authored many guide books, most recently Fly and Spin Fishing for River Smallmouths (\$19.25). Contact him at be_ingram@juno.com for more information.





Journal

2010 Outdoor Calendar of Events

Unless otherwise noted, for current information and registration on workshops go to the "Upcoming Events" page on our website at www.HuntFishVA.com or call 804-367-7800.

September 11–12: Eastern Regional Big Game Contest, www.vpsa.org.

September 25: Youth Deer Hunting Day, (ages 15 and younger).

September 25–26: Western Regional Big Game Contest and State Championship, www.iwla-rh.org.

September 9, 11, 16, 18 & 21: Photographing Colors, Patterns & Textures with Lynda Richardson, Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, Richmond. Go to www.lyndarichardsonphotography.com and look under 2010 Workshops or www.lewisginter.org and look under Adult Education or call (804) 262-9887 X322.

September 23, 25, 30 and October 2 & 5: Learn to Use Your Digital SLR Camera with Lynda Richardson, Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, Richmond. Go to www.lyndarichardsonphotography.com and look under 2010 Workshops or www.lewisginter.org and look under Adult Education or call (804) 262-9887 X322.

October 1–3: Hunter Skills Weekend, Holiday Lake; (434) 248-5444 or <http://holidaylake4h.com/>.

October 2: Women Exploring Loudoun Outdoors, (ages 14 and older). For more information: www.loudouniwla.org. For registration: lcciwla_welo@hotmail.com or call (540) 535-8891 or (703) 939-4089.

October 7–10: Eastern Shore Birding and Wildlife Festival, Cape Charles.

October 7, 9, 14, 16 & 19: An Introduction to Photographing Birds with Lynda Richardson at Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, Richmond. Go to www.lyndarichardsonphotography.com and look under 2010 Workshops or www.lewisginter.org and look under Adult Education or call (804) 262-9887 X322.

October 16: Youth Fall Turkey Hunt Day, (ages 15 and younger).



The Barking Tree Frog and Other Curious Tales

by Diane Casto Tennant
The University of Virginia Press, 2009
www.upress.virginia.edu
434-982-2932

"I have slept on the beach beside a nest of sea turtles and crawled through muddy caves. I have held the skull of a Jamestown settler four hundred years after his death and plastered dinosaur bones for transport... I have chased sharks at 3 a.m., warblers at 4, skeletons after breakfast, meteors at midnight and whales around the clock. Who says science isn't fun?"

—Diane Casto Tennant

Turning hard science into entertaining reading for the lay person is hard to pull off, but Diane Tennant, award-winning science writer for *The Virginian-Pilot*, manages to do the job with ease.

This collection of twenty-four narratives covers a broad range of subjects, and Tennant's chatty, casual

style cleverly envelopes the facts and figures. Her lively tales on such varied topics as Virginia's cretaceous rocks and fossils, loggerhead sea turtles, or prothonotary warblers painlessly impart important and amazing lessons about our natural world. The book's central narrative, "A Cosmic Tale," is a real page turner. It highlights the amazing story of the errant meteor that crashed into the Chesapeake Bay region over 35 million years ago, an event that helped shape portions of Virginia's signature coastline.

Perhaps the book's best characteristic is the gritty sense of adventure that percolates between the pages, illustrating that exciting journeys don't have to assume a National Geographic-style expeditionary scale to enjoy. Tennant's book uncovers the very real adventures and natural wonders that are just around the corner if only we take the time to open our eyes and pay attention. □

Outdoor Kids



Thomas Guess, son of Tom Guess with DGIF, catches his first fish during the family vacation to Douthat State Park in June.



"Oh, George, you found my lure. I thought I'd lost it."

Wildlife & Boating Info on Virginia.Gov

A new "Mapping Virginia" section of the state government portal now includes information about our wildlife management areas, boating access sites, and destinations on the statewide Birding and Wildlife Trail. While there, you can also link to our site to purchase hunting and fishing licenses.

Check it out at www.virginia.gov!

Quail Action Plan

Department staff are working with a broad range of public and private partners to restore critical upland habitat needed by the bobwhite quail to thrive. Among the many initiatives underway are:

- Establishment of early succession wildlife focus areas across the state, in concert with the work performed by Soil & Water Conservation Districts in Virginia;
- Wildlife professionals assisting with delivery of USDA Farm Bill programs to landowners that benefit quail and other, early succession wildlife species; and
- Establishment of demonstration areas that showcase technical tools put in place to effectively manage for quail.

For more information about the quail plan, go to:

www.HuntFishVA.com/wildlife/quail/action-plan/quail-action-plan.pdf

To contact a private lands wildlife biologist:
marc.puckett@dgif.virginia.gov



Happy 75th To The Blue Ridge Parkway!

Virginia Tech's College of Natural Resources in cooperation with Blue Ridge Parkway 75, Inc. is hosting "Imagining the Blue Ridge Parkway for the 21st Century: Sustaining Communities, Environments, and Economies" in October.

For information, search events, <http://blueridgeparkway75.org/>. But hurry, registration deadline is September 24, 2010.

Don't Forget! Mandatory Duck Stamps & HIP



All hunters who plan to hunt doves, waterfowl, rails, woodcock, snipe, coots, gallinules, or moorhens in Virginia must be registered with the Virginia Harvest Information Program (HIP). HIP is required each year and a new registration number is needed for the 2010-2011 hunting season. To obtain a new HIP number, register online at www.VAHIP.com or call 1-888-788-9772.

In addition, to hunt waterfowl in Virginia hunters must obtain a Federal Duck Stamp and the Virginia Migratory Waterfowl Conservation Stamp. The annual Migratory Waterfowl Conservation Stamp can be purchased for \$10.00 (resident or non-resident) from VDGIF license agents or from the Department's website. To request collector stamps and prints, contact Mike Hinton



“What we’ve got here is...failure to communicate,” is one of the most vivid lines from one of my all-time favorite classic movies. The title of the movie alone—Cool Hand Luke—should tell you why it is a classic. From watching that movie and observing you, it seems that humans, in general, have trouble communicating with one another. Your use of verbal communication sometimes becomes louder and louder when you get excited or irritated. Observing humans is probably how we dogs learned to bark.

Communication from one dog to another is often visual. Dogs are adept at reading body language—both yours and other dogs. We look at the way another dog is standing or lays down when another dog approaches, the way it wags its tail, the way its head or ears are cocked, or the way the hair may rise up on its back. A dog’s body language tells us whether we might enjoy that dog’s company or should give him some space. A dog that can read another dog’s body language correctly generally knows how to act. A dog or human that cannot read body language or just *ignores* what it is reading will often find itself in some degree of difficulty.

All of this became very evident to me the other day when Ol’ Jones was communicating with the alpha female around here. He was having one of those uncomfortable moments

which begin when the alpha female starts a conversation with the four words every human male dreads hearing from the human female: “*We need to talk.*” Human males hate these words because they know they will be squirming more than a dog at a flea circus before the female has had her say. The squirming comes from the agonizing length of time males have to pretend they are interested in what is being said, while still trying to stay awake. Falling asleep during a communication period with the female is a very bad thing for the male. But keeping awake is hard for the male, because he knows the communication period will end with him saying *his* four words: “*I am really sorry.*” For a male, if he already knows how the conversation is going to end, it is really hard for him to listen to the rest of the story.

Now the human male and the dog kinda understand each other after they have spent just a little time together. We both just want the facts—plain and simple. No need for a great deal of detail when telling a story. Use as few words as possible to convey the point. Ol’ Jones can issue a few grunts and give a hand gesture, and I pretty much have it figured out what he wants or expects me to do.

A prime example of this is when Ol’ Jones thought it would be a good idea if he took the alpha female hunting with us. We had not had much luck the day we went out, but we did

not want to leave empty-handed because we both had been sorta bragging to the female what a good hunting team we were. Ol’ Jones spotted a promising bit of cover where he thought there might be a pheasant. He grunted, then pointed to the way he wanted me to go.

For some reason the alpha female, who had been patiently following us around all day, wanted me to go to a particular spot in the *opposite* direction. Instead of grunting, she pointed to a particular shrub and gave the *Latin* name for it. She then remarked about the color of the leaves and reflected on how the palette of the sky in the background, combined with said leaves, reminded her of the colors she saw in an Italian chapel in some remote place in Tuscany on the third of June about six years ago. She believed it was raining that day. She went on about the woodwork of the chapel doors and the rich texture of the 500-year-old tapestry inside. By the time she had given me the information she thought I needed, I could not remember if I was her hunting partner or her *interior decorator*!

I could read Ol’ Jones’s body language and he was coming to a slow boil. The uncanny thing was that my nose was agreeing with the lady, and so I headed where she sent me. Up popped a rooster, which Mrs. Ol’ Jones dropped as pretty as you please with her 20 gauge!

The communication part of the day pretty much ended right then for everyone. The only words I remember hearing after that were when Ol’ Jones was putting me back in my crate. He bent over and looked at me kind of odd-like and whispered, “*We need to talk!*”

Keep a leg up, Luke

Luke is a black Labrador retriever who spends his spare time hunting up good stories with his best friend, Clarke C. Jones. You can contact Luke and Clarke at www.clarkecjones.com.

Photo Tips

by Lynda Richardson

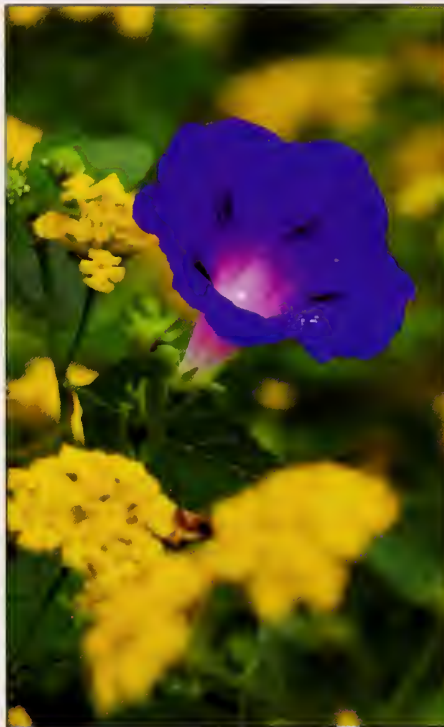
The Theater of Color

The stage is set. The curtains rise and the light comes up to reveal a brilliantly colored scene. Your eyes are first drawn to the loud and fiery reds, only to move around the stage to follow the cheerful yellows and jubilant oranges. Then, you look closer to see cool blue resting calmly in the background while comforting green lounges in front, not vying for anyone's attention. Almost unnoticed, gray and brown appear here and there, making everyone else look bright and colorful in comparison.

Life is a stage, and in photography color plays an important role. Red is the "star of the show," screaming loudly to capture your gaze. Yellow and orange vie for star attention but always bow to red in every scene. As for supporting roles, these are played by calm and unassuming greens and blues as well as neutral colors like gray and brown. These supporting colors have the job of making the "stars" look good.

Just like a painter, a photographer must be aware of how colors work together or against one another. Strong reds, yellows, and oranges will always be noticed first in a photograph—even if they are in the background. If you photograph a subtly colored subject, don't include a bright color in the background that will distract the viewer! The job of greens and blues is to push bright colors forward in a scene, making them stand out even more. Nothing will make a red cardinal pop out of a photograph more than a rich blue sky or lush green foliage.

Certain colors work together well and have great "chemistry." Purple and yellow would be examples of complementary colors. Orange and green are opposite colors, creating tension between one another. Sometimes this can create interest, but at other times it could ruin the plot!



The complementary yellow and violet colors are found opposite one another on the color wheel. These colors tend to accentuate and bring out the best in each other.

© Lynda Richardson

For more information on color, I recommend spending some time with an artist's color wheel. Colors are presented in a circle to reveal how they relate to one another. You can find information about color wheels on the internet, at an art store, or at your local library or bookstore.

In your next photographic endeavor, consider what role color will play in your images. Be selective when you cast a shot and don't let some of the stars take advantage of your vision! Hopefully, you will have a Tony Award-winning production. Good Luck and Happy Shooting! □

You are invited to submit one to five of your best photographs to "Image of the Month," Virginia Wildlife Magazine, P.O. Box 11104, 4010 West Broad Street, Richmond, VA 23230-1104. Send original slides, super high-quality prints, or high-res jpeg, tiff, or raw files on a disk and include a self-addressed, stamped envelope or other shipping method for return. Also, please include any pertinent information regarding how and where you captured the image and what camera and settings you used, along with your phone number. We look forward to seeing and sharing your work with our readers.

Image of the Month



Congratulations go to Jeff Turner of Sedley for his portrait of a neutral colored northern water snake photographed on the Nottoway River. Jeff is the Blackwater Nottoway Riverkeeper and was the first to submit to us a still image shot with a digital camcorder. Panasonic PV-GS320 digital camcorder, no ISO recorded, 1/500th, f/2.8.

On The Water

by Tom Guess



Boaters Speak a Different Language

Nautical terms have always intrigued me. Have you ever noticed that boaters speak a different language from everyone else? For example: "I shoved off in my dory dead reckoning around the double; then came a squall hard off my beam that caused me lots of trouble." What I really said is, "I shoved off (got underway) in my *dory* (a general purpose boat or sailing boat for pulling) to *dead reckon* (navigate by course, speed, and drift estimates) around a *double* (peninsula or point of land); then came a *squall* (short, sudden violent wind with rain or snow) hard off my *beam* (the widest part of the boat, often center) that caused me lots of trouble. I know most of us don't speak like this today, but many of the nautical terms that we routinely use have a long history, and I thought it would be fun to share them with you with the help of John G. Rogers (1985).

Bow: The forward end or front of any craft.

Cut and Run: Originally meant to cut the anchor cable, or to cut the gaskets to make sail, to get under way in a hurry.

Deadwood: The extension of the hull underwater, where it is shaped into the rudder post.

Dungarees: The modern sailors' work clothes. The term is not modern. It is from the 18th century and comes from the Hindi word *dungri*, for a type of Indian cotton cloth.

Ebb: Outgoing tidal flow.

Eddy: A circular or reverse flow, backwards.



©Dwight Dyke

Freeboard: The height of a craft's side above the waterline.

Gear: An all-encompassing word for a ship's or sailor's equipment.

Ground: The bottom. As to run aground or ground your vessel.

The Head: Earlier, the crew's latrine; now, generally all the shipboard "facilities."

Helm: The simplest definition is "tiller," but the term could be said to refer to the steering apparatus of any craft.

Holiday: A gap in one's shipboard work, as an unscrubbed or unpainted area.

Hull: The body of any craft.

Inboard: Said of anything inside the hull, outer rails, or outer rigging of a vessel.

Jolly Roger: The traditional decorative and identifying flag of pirates and buccaneers; usually black, with a design of macabre nature such as the well-known skull-and-crossed-bones.

Keel: The "backbone" of a boat or ship; also on sailing craft the projecting structure extending below the bottom, for ballast and directional control.

Landfall: The sighting of land from sea (sometimes a very happy event).

Landlubber: A shore-sider, especially one who knows little about the water.

Leeward: In a position or direction away from that of the wind.

Port: A harbor city or town. The left side of a craft or boat when facing forward.

Starboard: The right side of a craft or boat when facing forward.

I hope you have enjoyed this, and remember, until next time: Be Responsible, Be Safe, and Have Fun! ☐

Tom Guess, U. S. Coast Guard (Ret.), serves as a statewide coordinator for the Boating Safety Education Program at the DGIF.

Source:

Rogers, J. G., 1985. *Origins of Sea Terms*, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, CT.



Dining In

by Ken and Maria Perrotte

Stovetop Goose with Raspberry Sauce

Waterfowl enthusiasts are fortunate when it comes to geese. Virginia is a major destination for migrating birds in the winter, and there are still many resident geese that call farms, golf courses, shopping malls, parks, and more their home.

Hunter bag limits on these resident geese are especially generous during the early seasons before migratory birds arrive. These birds are well-fed, fat, and tasty.

You can roast goose whole, but many hunters breast out their birds. Here's a recipe for cooking those breasts on the stovetop and finishing them with a couple of sauces that complement the rich flavor of the meat.

Ingredients (Serves 2)

- 1 Goose breast, skinless and sliced about ½ inch thick
- Meat tenderizer
- Salt and pepper
- 2 tablespoons butter
- ½ cup beef broth
- ¼ cup dry red wine
- 1 tablespoon chopped shallots
- ¼ teaspoon chopped chives
- 2 2- to 3-inch sprigs of fresh rosemary
- 1 teaspoon herbs de Provence (if not available, use ½ teaspoon dried thyme and ¼ teaspoon each of marjoram, basil, and sage and add an extra sprig of rosemary)
- ⅓ cup raspberry jam
- ¼ cup fresh or frozen raspberries
- 1 teaspoon cornstarch

Pierce the meat with a fork and season the goose lightly with meat tenderizer and pepper. Let it rest for 30 minutes. Heat butter over medium-high heat and sauté goose until brown on both sides, but still rare in the middle. Do not cook the meat past rare at this point. Repeat: Do not overcook! As restaurant chefs have admonished in the past, "We're not responsible for meat cooked well done." When it comes to cooking goose breasts, well done can easily equate to tenderized boot leather.

The goal is to have the meat reach a nice warm center, pink middle, or medium, when finished.

Remove goose from pan and add broth, wine, shallots, chives, spices, and seasonings. Simmer uncovered until reduced in half (about 10 min.). Add jam and cook another 5 minutes. Remove rosemary. In a separate cup, slowly add a teaspoon of cold water to cornstarch, stirring to prevent lumps. Then, stir this mixture into sauce to thicken. Add berries and adjust with more salt and pepper to taste.

Add the goose and any accumulated juices, and heat until meat is warmed.

Blackberry Sauce Option

If raspberries aren't available or you think you may prefer blackberries, a sauce of blackberry and peppercorn is also delicious with goose.

If choosing this option, liberally season the meat with fresh cracked pepper before sautéing. Follow the recipe directions, but substitute blackberries and blackberry jam. For the spices and seasonings, use one sprig of rosemary and one teaspoon whole peppercorns, but then remove the peppercorns prior to adding the fruit as the finishing step. If you don't, well, you'll understand when you crunch down on one.

Serving

Polenta can be made ahead of time, following directions on the package. Grits can be substituted if polenta is not available. Serve the goose over polenta and drizzle with sauce.

Sautéed green beans make a nice side dish. Simply cook fresh or frozen green beans in olive oil and a little fresh chopped garlic. Add slivered almonds or mushrooms if desired.

The raspberry sauce version does well with a merlot wine pairing, while for the more peppery blackberry edition, a gutsy cabernet sauvignon, old vine zinfandel, or other serious red wine can be a wonderful match. □

VIRGINIA WILDLIFE

PHOTO CONTEST REMINDER

The deadline for submitting photographs for the 2010 Virginia Wildlife Photography Contest is **November 2, 2010**.

Winning photographs will appear in the special March 2011 issue of the magazine. For more information about the contest and to view last year's edition online, visit the Department's website at: <http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/photocontest>.



Take a friend. **MAKE A HUNTER**



VIRGINIA APPRENTICE HUNTING LICENSE

The apprentice hunting license serves as a first-time Virginia resident or nonresident hunting license and is good for 2 years.

The license holder must be accompanied and directly supervised by a mentor over 18 who has on his or her person a valid Virginia hunting license.

The apprentice license does not qualify the holder to purchase a regular hunting license, nor exempt the holder from compliance with Department regulations. A hunter education course must be successfully completed to obtain a regular hunting license.

A bear, deer, turkey license and all applicable stamps or permits are required in addition to the apprentice license.

Previous Virginia resident and nonresident hunting license holders may not use an apprentice license.

To learn more about the Virginia Apprentice Hunting License, call (866) 721-6911 or log on to www.HuntFishVA.com.

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Visit our website at www.HuntFishVA.com

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It's once again time to purchase a Virginia Wildlife calendar—a thoughtful gift that's still a bargain at \$10 each.

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